

Reserve Bank now says that interest rates are likely to rise at the end of the year to tighten our money supply. Every percent increase in interest rates adds \$140 billion to our debt. Higher interest rates will erode the income of every American and make it harder to buy a home, a car, or a college education. Spending more will not help them. In fact, spending more will prolong the problem.

In the 1990s, when government spending as a share of GDP shrank, employment grew. Despite the surge in government spending over the past 2 years, unemployment still hovers stubbornly at about 9 percent. We do not need more public spending. What we need is more private investment. When private investment grows, unemployment shrinks. The American people understand all of this and that is why they want us to arrive at a plan that keeps our government running, that respects the sacrifices of our military in real terms, and puts us back on the road to fiscal health.

We owe it to these hard-working men and women to bring the 2011 budget to a reasonable and realistic conclusion and then move on to the important matters that still lie before us, including the 2012 budget. That is where we can address all of the substantive and urgent issues that we must resolve to get America's financial house in order; issues such as making sure we have a prudent level of spending, reforming our Tax Code, and making entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare solvent and more secure for our seniors, both now and long into the future. We owe that not just to our current constituents but to future generations of Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mrs. BOXER. I ask unanimous consent the period for morning business for debate only be extended until 8 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, and the majority leader to be recognized at 8 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I came over here at this very precarious moment, hours away from a possible shutdown, to basically say there is absolutely no reason to shut this government down, absolutely no reason. Why? Because both sides agree that we need to cut the budget. Both sides agree that we need to reduce the deficit. When the debate got started, the Republicans put out a number and, guess what. We came to their number. We came all the way to their number.

Then they said, whoops, no, we don't like that, we are going to go to a bigger number. We said we are worried because, as my friend from North Dakota said, we care about job creation, and

Mark Zandi, the key economic adviser to JOHN MCCAIN's campaign, said if you do what the Republicans want to do, that is the Republicans in the House on H.R. 1, that will cost 700,000 jobs. Can you believe that? After we are finally coming out of this recession—thank the Lord God we had a quarter of a million new jobs last month—and here they are going to take a meat axe to this budget and according to outside experts going to destroy the economic recovery and set us right back into a recession.

So we said hold off here, we believe we need to be wise about this. We went to your number that you originally put out there. Why do you keep moving the goal posts?

They said: Well, that is the way it is. We moved the goal posts. Take it or leave it.

We said all right, we are going to go back and we are going to go as far in your direction as we possibly can do and not jeopardize jobs. We went back and here is where we are. We went 78 percent of the way to the Republican new number.

Here is the deal. I want the American people to be the judge of this. There was an election in 2010. The Republicans won big in the House and they took it over, so they run the House. The Democrats retained control of the Senate. I know very much about it because I was one of those seats that was being watched. We kept control of the Senate and of course the President is a Democrat and he is there for a couple of years. Of course some of us hope for a lot longer, but here is the deal: Out of the three parties to the negotiations, Republicans control one-third of the government and Democrats two-thirds. We did not look at our Republican friends and say we control much more than you do, so we will only go a third of the way to you. We were willing to give and give and to look at expenditures that we believe are key, and we said we are willing to give some of this up, and we marched over to their side 78 percent of the way.

If I stopped someone in the street, a person who maybe did not have much experience about beltway politics, and I said if you were negotiating with two of your friends and they saw something their way and you saw it your way and they came 78 percent of the way to what you wanted, what would you do? I think the average person would say: Hurray, let's get this done.

Well, that is what I say tonight. Let's get this done. There is no reason to shut down the Federal Government when we have come—the Democrats have come, by way of cuts, 78 percent of the way to our Republican friends.

But let me tell you the bad news. It turns out this is not what the fight is about at all. At the eleventh hour, our Republican friends are holding this country hostage to an agenda which is about cutting women's health care.

Now, you may say: Could you say that again, Senator BOXER. What?

Yes, this debate over the budget, where we have come 78 percent of the way and made painful cuts, is not about budget cutting; it is about women's health. Let me tell you specifically what it is about. It is about a women's health care program known as title X.

I am sure people are saying: What is that?

It is very simple. In 1970, a Republican President named Richard Nixon signed this bill. And do you know who voted for it in the House? President George Herbert Walker Bush. We are talking about a bipartisan bill to give women the health care they need. And the Republicans, to date, have moved so far away from their own legacy, from their own history, that they are off the charts in extreme land somewhere.

I want to share one reason women use these title X clinics as their first line of health. And by the way, millions of women do—and men—because they get help for high blood pressure, diabetes checks, they get help for breast cancer screening, they get help for pelvic exams, they get help for sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS testing, referrals for additional medical screening and diagnostic testing, blood screening, smoking cessation, cholesterol screening, infertility counseling, and, if asked for, birth control, which, when it is counseled in the right way, birth control will prevent unwanted pregnancies and therefore bring down the number of abortions.

Somebody explain to me how our country is better off when our American families are shut out of health care, health care that is so cost-effective, that for every dollar that is spent through the title X health care program, which goes to local clinics—and 75 percent of the funding does not go to Planned Parenthood. Can we be clear here? Planned Parenthood gets 25 percent and does a fabulous job. But the fact is, not one penny can ever be used for abortion or people could go to jail. There is no money in here for abortion, period, end of quote. It is because of the Hyde amendment—I know this because I was in the House of Representatives when we dealt with the Hyde amendment. We said there ought to be an exception for rape and incest, OK? So I personally know the Hyde amendment is the law of the land. So if anyone tells you they are closing down the government because of abortion, it has nothing to do with abortion. It has to do with mainstream health care for women and their families.

So here we are. We have come 78 percent of the way to them on cuts. By the way, they announced last night that was it. We agreed that was fine. But now we don't have an agreement.

I have my fingers crossed that at 8 o'clock, the majority leader will say that we have overcome our problems; that he will say we go back to agreeing on the number that was agreed to last night. It is well above \$70 billion. Remember, we cut that out in just the

next 5 months or so. That is a big bite, but we all know we have to reduce the deficit. But I hope our Republican friends have backed off from this, backed off of them completely shutting down and eliminating a women's health care program used by their families, and men, 5 million of them. It is cost-effective. It provides \$4 of benefits for every dollar invested. Mr. President, 4,500 clinics, 75 percent of them non-Planned Parenthood, 25 percent of them Planned Parenthood; none used for abortion, all used for health care. I hope they will back off and say: You know what, we have reflected on this. We have read this. We know the health care our people are getting at home. We checked it out. We called our district. We called our State. And we have decided to come off of this crazy idea, and we will stand with Richard Nixon and we will stand with George Herbert Walker Bush, who supported title X.

I can't imagine how our Republican friends would rather shut down the government than to continue this health care program. I cannot imagine why they would rather take paychecks away from our hard-working men and women in uniform and others who are cleaning up Superfund sites, who are working to deliver veterans' benefits, who are working to keep our parks open. Why would they take paychecks away from those people because they do not want to continue breast cancer screening to women?

Speaking of paychecks, you have to know that the Senate unanimously passed a bill that said that if we fail to keep the government open, we do not get paid because, guess what, Members of Congress get paid by a special statute. Everybody else does not get their paycheck, but we get our paycheck. We sent this offer to Speaker BOEHNER. Do you know what happened to it? I do not know what happened to it. I do not know what happened to it. It would take him 2 minutes right now to bring it up. So if he is watching this—I guess he is not, but if he were, I would say: Just take 5 minutes and go to your Rules Committee and bring this bill up and let America know that you, Mr. BOEHNER, and your colleagues who are ready to shut this government down will not get a paycheck.

I am so tired of the hypocrisy around this place. I really am. One of the comments from a Congressman over there—he was complaining. He said: I do not make enough. Mr. President, \$174,000. He does not make enough. I cried for him. But I have to say this: Where are his tears for his staffers? Where are his tears for the military who are not going to get paid? Where are his tears for his people cleaning up Superfund sites and for the guy out here on the Mall?

There is the biggest day for our national park, the biggest week, the biggest month—April. Some 800,000 people come from all over the world to go to our national park, many for the Cherry Blossom Festival. Some people already

may be here for that—kids, families. These hotels are booked. The restaurants are booked. Where are this Congressman's tears for the people whose family vacations were destroyed? Maybe they can't get back their airfare. Neighborhood restaurants here may lose money this week, and the hotels.

In my State, we have Yosemite National Park. If you go there, you will be transformed into another world and another place. I tell you, the first time I ever stepped out there in that valley, my heart almost dropped from the beauty from what God has given us. That experience could be shut down in this shutdown.

I am not making a choice between Yosemite and the 46 clinics in the Central Valley who get title X funding, 46 clinics that see hundreds and hundreds of patients in need of health care. I am not going to choose. I am going to say: Keep this government open. What is your problem with women? What is your problem with giving women the health care they deserve? What happened in your life that you do not understand that a woman who gets an early breast cancer screening can have her life saved? What is wrong with you over there? A Pap smear. I am sure that if it were your daughter, if it were your wife, oh my God, you would do anything to get them to the doctor to make sure they were healthy. Where is your voice for these 5 million women? I have to say that I am baffled on this one. This is not about abortion. I already said that. Not one dollar goes to abortion.

I have to say that the Republicans would rather close all of our national parks and they would rather suspend tax refunds for hard-working Americans than give cervical screenings to women and provide HIV and STD testing for men and women.

You know, they are going to close the Small Business Administration, and that hurts our small businesses and that hurts jobs.

They are going to close down the mortgages from FHA, which backs about a third of new mortgages. So if you are finally coming out of this mess and you have bought a house, about a third of new mortgages are backed by them, so you are stuck in your tracks. If you are trying to sell a house and you thought you had it done, you now have to put it off. I have to say that to do this at any time is ridiculous, but to do this because you do not want women to get health care is a sin. To do this in a time of three wars makes no sense at all.

Food and drug inspections. We know what happens when particularly our kids get sick because there is some kind of foodborne illness. No more inspections. Closed down.

So I am saying once again, to sum it up in the best way I can, yes, no question, we had an election, and the Republicans won the House. And there are three parties to this agreement: the

Senate, controlled by Democrats; the White House, controlled by Democrats; and a Republican House. So the Republicans control one-third of the government that is making this decision. We have come 78 percent their way because we know we have to make painful cuts. We are mindful of that. We are not standing in our corner with our blankie and our teddy bear with our finger in our mouth saying: Please, leave us alone. We are willing. We are willing to go their way. And they have not—well, they have moved the other way. In other words, we met their number, and then they made a new number. We met that number, and then they made a new number. Now we are 78 percent to the new number.

Please, we do not have to shut down this government. What a waste. What a ridiculous waste. In my State, I would urge my Republican friends who want to shut down the title X women's health program, visit the St. Johns Well Child and Family Center in Los Angeles. Find out about their work. Find out about the good work they do for the people there. Call Our Savior Center in El Monte, CA. They receive title X funds too. Find out about the work they do. Call the Good Samaritan Family Resources Center in San Francisco. Find out about the good work they do with title X funding.

Think about your legacy as a Republican—Richard Nixon signing this proudly, George H.W. Bush voting for it in the House. This is a bipartisan women's health care program. There is no need to shut down the government because you want to stop funding a program that helps our people, that is cost-effective, that stops the spread of disease. How they could do this is beyond me.

I ask the people of America who may be watching this debate and hearing about these issues—it is time now. There are a few hours. Let's flood Speaker BOEHNER's phones. Let's e-mail all the leaders, Democratic and Republican, and say: OK. It is time to end this standoff.

The last thing I want to bring up is this: I have been in politics a long time. I love public service. It is in my bones. I have watched sometimes what I call an overreach. It sometimes happens by Republicans and sometimes by Democrats. What I am seeing across this country is an overreach by the far right of the Republican Party which is driving the Republican Party agenda. We saw it in Wisconsin. There we had a Governor who came to the microphone with tremendous support, newly elected. He said: We have a budget problem, and we are going to have to make some tough decisions.

Everyone nodded and said: Yes.

He said: These unions that represent the workers, they better come to the table because if they don't, I am going to have to take some steps to reduce their salaries and all the rest.

The unions said: OK. We will come to the table.

The unions came to the table. Guess what they said. We will give up on every dollar you have asked us to do.

The Governor said: Really? Really? Then he said: Fine. I will make those cuts, and I am taking away your bargaining rights forever.

That was an overreach. What we are doing is responding to Republicans who said: We have a deficit problem, and we need your help.

We said: Yes. And we came to the table. We met them at their number. Then they increased their number. We said: OK, we will come a little more. As of last night, we came 78 percent of the way. They agreed last night. Now it turns out, just like in Wisconsin, it wasn't about the numbers. It was about some kind of an agenda that would throw women under the bus.

I am here to say that isn't going to happen. There isn't one Democrat in our Democratic caucus, male or female, from one side of our party to the other—and, believe me, we have a big range of philosophies—not one of them is willing to say this program ought to go because they know it is saving women's lives.

As HARRY REID, our leader, said today at a press conference: Someday I may not be around to help my kids and my grandkids. I will not be here forever to help them. What if things go wrong and they have to go to a clinic and they have to get that mammogram. There is only one clinic that does it, though, and that is the one in Texas. But they have screenings. What if you have to have that Pap smear. What if you need that referral for further testing? What if you need to get help because you have diabetes and you don't have health insurance and you go to that clinic and they help you.

HARRY REID said: We are here today not only about today but about tomorrow.

Here is a program that has lasted since 1970. Count the decades, folks. We are not going to end a program that has its roots in bipartisanship, that has its roots in caring about our fellow human beings. It isn't necessary. A budget is about a budget is about a budget. It isn't about somebody's political vendetta.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas is recognized.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to proceed for 12 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, still at this late date, I want to remain optimistic that we will reach a final deal on Federal spending. At least the dueling press conferences are continuing as I speak. I hope the negotiations are continuing by someone somewhere. Hope springs eternal. Under the banner of hope and change, I would hope the majority leader would change his mind and at the very least bring the House-passed measure to the floor for a vote

to fund the military through the end of the fiscal year and avert a shutdown of the federal government, and make a significant reduction in spending. Anything less is irresponsible.

Kansans are now calling my office. They have been all day, all week, all year. Their message is clear. It is time to stop spending money we don't have. The House-passed measure is but a small step in this direction and would keep the government from shutting down, a goal I think everybody would like to see happen.

Let's clarify the facts. The national debt is over \$14 trillion and growing daily. Some now say it is \$14.6 trillion. We are fast approaching the debt ceiling and another very serious decision. I know the majority leadership remembers the last time the debt ceiling was raised. It was four times in the last 2 years.

By the way, the majority spent twice as much in 2 years as was spent the last 4 years of the previous administration. If this continues, then by the year 2014 interest payments on the debt alone will be greater than all discretionary spending outside of defense. The debate or fuss about which programs must not be cut will not be debated on the floor of this distinguished body because they will all be cut. There won't be any money. The money will go to pay interest on the debt.

The House of Representatives is doing what its majority pledged to do, what it was elected to do—reduce Washington spending.

As a logical consequence—and it should not be a surprise to any member of the majority of this body or the minority in the other—the House passed a bill to bring government spending back down to 2008 levels. That is what they said they would do, and that is what they are doing.

In March the majority in this Chamber rejected these modest cuts in spending, and we have been operating under a series of short-term continuing resolutions ever since. All of us know that government by CR is no way to govern. The leadership of the previous Congress failed to pass a budget last year, failed to pass even a single appropriations bill. We are still dealing with that abdication of responsibility.

But we are where we are. The House passed another measure to keep the Federal Government open for another week, funded our military men and women and their families for the next 6 months, and cut government spending by \$12 billion while we negotiate a long-term solution. Hopefully, we could continue to negotiate a long-term solution.

I know tempers are frayed. What is bothersome is that the leadership refuses to bring this measure to a vote. They have the votes to defeat it. They also refuse to put forth an alternative proposal to cut spending. It is one thing to blame the majority in the other body and say you simply can't support it. If that is the case, bring it

to the floor. Let's vote on it, and let's see what kind of an alternative the leadership here offers.

The media is referring to this impasse as a shutdown of the Federal Government, but we need to be careful before we call this a government shutdown. The people of Kansas and all of America are rightly outraged that funding for our troops and their families is at risk, funding for most customer service support at the VA is at risk, and that funding for a wide range of economic development and agriculture programs is at risk. But that is not true with regard to one segment of our government. Just as the Army sings "as these caissons keep rolling along," so does the perpetual motion machine of Federal regulation. The Federal regulation machine is such that even a government shutdown can't stop it.

Earlier this week, I came to the floor to talk about the concerns I am hearing from our community bankers in Kansas. According to a summary of the Dodd-Frank act by Davis Polk, the act mandates that 11 different agencies create at least 243 more regulations, issue 67 one-time reports or studies, and 22 new periodic reports. Financial regulators have already issued more than 1,400 pages of regulatory proposals, and 5,000 pages of regulations are expected. These will create additional and significant compliance costs that will impact the ability of every bank to serve its community. They come on top of existing regulation, including 1,700 pages of consumer regulations and hundreds of pages of regulations regarding lending practices and operations that banks are already required to comply with, and they do in good faith.

Some folks might think—and naturally so—if the government is shut down, regulators won't be on the job either. Wrong. Apparently nothing, absolutely nothing can or will stop regulators from regulating. In the case of some financial regulators, agencies not funded by taxpayer dollars, they will be on the job, and we can anticipate that the burdensome regulations will continue.

Well, what about implementing the costly and controversial health care reform bill? Will a government shutdown slow this hugely unpopular program chock-full of regulations? Well, the answer, of course, is no.

In the Secretary's contingency plans for HHS, under a list of what will remain open during this shutdown, she believes that "operations of the Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight"—its a mouthful, Center for Consumer Information and Insurance Oversight, the regulating agency under the Department of Health and Human Services that is working to issue regulations to implement health care reform—"could continue as funding was provided through the Affordable Care Act."

Well, this is just another example of full steam ahead with ObamaCare, just

like during the health care reform debate. The regulatory overreach that has become a hallmark of this administration is not stopped by even a shutdown of the Federal Government. For example, regulations like the one issued just recently, days ago, by the Department of Health and Human Services on something called accountable care organizations, also known as ACOs—ACOs used to be HMOs; didn't like HMOs too much, so we have something like HMOs, but now we call them ACOs—turned 6 pages of ObamaCare into 429 pages of regulations—429 pages in just 1 regulation. These new regulations empower Dr. Berwick, the man in charge, and CMS, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, to make decisions about how medical care will be delivered in this country.

So a government shutdown or not, under a cowering business community, the incredible Federal regulation machine goes on like a giant creature from a video game, belching fire, smoke, fines, and regulations. Nothing, not even a shutdown of the Federal Government, can slay the regulating dragon.

This debate should not be about party politics. It should not even be about regulation, except I discovered the regulation is going on despite the government shutdown, which I think is most unusual, to say the least. This is really about reducing spending and finally trying to tighten our Federal belt. We are borrowing 40 cents of every dollar we spend. I said that by 2014 all discretionary funds would be used to pay off the interest on the national debt.

The House has now passed a bill to keep our military families whole and the government running at 2008 levels while we try to work out a long-term solution. A Federal shutdown does not benefit anyone except regulators who under a shutdown will continue to regulate, now unchecked.

I urge the majority leader to at least bring the House-passed bill to the floor for a vote. I thank all the people who have worked so terribly hard on the negotiations. I hope they are successful, even though “tempus is fugiting”—time is running out.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, well, we are less than 6 hours away from a potential government shutdown. I take this time to sort of bring people up to date in Maryland as to where we are. I say that because in Maryland we have about 150,000 civilian active Federal employees. Obviously, they are directly affected if we have a government shutdown. They will not get a paycheck. Whether they work or not, they will not be getting their paychecks. I just want everyone to think about what that means. If you have a car payment that is due and you do not have a paycheck or a full paycheck, you still have to make that car pay-

ment. You might not have the money to do it. If you have certain responsibilities on a student loan, you may not be able to come up with the money to deal with it. So it is going to cause real problems for those Federal workers who had nothing at all to do with the problems we are confronting in passing a budget. They are not at fault. But yet they will be the first ones who will be suffering as a result of a government shutdown.

But it does not end with the Federal workforce because the Federal workforce, with their salaries, buys goods and services. Literally thousands of small businesses in Maryland are going to be adversely affected, and many around the country, because of the impact of the Federal workforce being on furlough, not getting their checks, the impact that is going to have on our businesses and on our economy.

But it does not end there. Federal contractors who depend upon the Federal contracts, whether to help us with national security or homeland security or to deal with health care issues, are going to be affected also because these contracts are not going to go forward.

So I really want to continue to underscore that a government shutdown will have a major negative impact, not just on our Federal workforce, not just on the businesses that are going to be hurt as a result of it, but on our entire economy. All of us will suffer.

But I really take this time to try to bring people up to date on where we are on the negotiations because I have heard many of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle say: Gee, if we could only balance the budget, if we could only bring up a short-term CR. That is not the problem. It is not the problem we are confronting right now because, quite frankly, the negotiators have agreed on the dollar amount of a budget from now to the end of the year. That number has been agreed to. So this is not about the Federal deficit any longer. It is about whether we can reach an agreement on a budget for the remainder of this year—not the dollar amount.

We are now tied up on what we call the policy riders. But we are not even talking about all the policy riders; we are talking about one policy rider which my colleague from California, Senator BOXER, I think outlined very clearly.

I wish to take this time on behalf of my wife, on behalf of my daughter, on behalf of my two little granddaughters, because it is about women's health care issues. That is what we are talking about, and we are talking about whether we are going to be able to allow those programs to move forward during the next 6 months. It does not affect the dollars, the types of programs that we allow. So to make it clear, we are talking about women's health care issues that deal principally with preventive health care—the cancer screenings to keep women healthy. Not one dollar of those funds can be

used for abortions. So let's make that clear from the beginning. This is not part of the abortion debate. This is talking about whether we should allow this type of policy rider to be on this bill. It is not appropriate. I think all of us understand it is not appropriate.

But I even go further than that. I am not even sure it is about that. It appears to many of us that you have an element in the House of Representatives on the Republican side that really wants to see a government shutdown. They have said that. They applauded the Speaker when the Speaker said: Let's get prepared for a government shutdown. They gave him a standing ovation. They said, over and over again, maybe a government shutdown will be good. Well, a government shutdown will not be good. I think we all can agree on that. If this is about the budget, as it should be, a government shutdown costs more money.

Then I hear a lot of my colleagues come to the floor and say: Look, we have to get rid of all this red ink and all these deficits. We could go back to the fact that we did balance the budget in the 1990s. We did it without a single Republican vote. We took a deficit and we balanced the budget.

When George W. Bush became President, he had a large surplus—only to see the policies of that administration, which went to war and did not pay for it, and we ended up with large deficits and an economy that was losing 700,000 jobs a month when Barack Obama became President.

We could go back and start talking about how we got here, but the question is, How are we going to get the budget back into balance? There, I agree with my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. We need to do that. But remember, the debate tonight on preventing the government from shutting down has nothing to do with that. The dollar amounts are in agreement. It is the policy issues concerning women's health care or whether, in fact, there is a group on the other side that represents the tea party that does not want to enter into an agreement. Remember, they said: Don't compromise at all. “No compromise” was their position, where they controlled the day.

But I must tell you, we have to come together and deal with the budget deficit. There are 64 of us—32 Democrats, 32 Republicans—who have signed a letter saying we are prepared to consider all the issues of balancing the budget, whether it is domestic spending, military spending, mandatory spending, or revenues. That is what we are going to have to do. We are going to have to get together and put the Nation's interests first. I believe we can do that. I believe we can get this budget into balance.

But it starts with a little good-faith effort here tonight, a good-faith effort. When we have already reached the agreement on the dollar amount, let's not let a minority in the House of Representatives prevent us from keeping the government operating—that is

what it comes down to—so the Federal worker in Maryland or that person who happens to be in Rhode Island tonight, and tomorrow recognizes he needs his passport renewed in order to take a trip, can find the passport office open or whether it is that potential homeowner who is going to need an FHA loan and is told that if there is a government shutdown, that loan cannot go forward or whether it is that family who was planning to come to the Nation's Capital and enjoy the Smithsonian and is going to be told the Smithsonian is now going to be closed. Let's not use those individuals as a target for the extreme actions in the other body.

I am convinced we still have time to get this done. We know offers have been made in good faith. We know we have the dollar amounts. So I hope that within the next couple hours we can prevent a government shutdown because it absolutely makes no sense.

My constituents are angry about this, and so am I. I hope we will see reason prevail, and then we can move on and deal with the real budget problems of this country. We cannot deal with it in only 12 percent of the budget, and that is all we are talking about here in this budget for the rest of this year. Hopefully, we will be able to get together and figure out how we can move forward. But it starts with keeping government functioning. It starts with honoring the types of commitments we have all talked about here to negotiate in good faith.

I have said this many times: It is not going to be the budget the Democrats want. It will not be the budget the Republicans want. That is what negotiations are about. But when you have some on the other side who say: Look, it is going to be our way or no way, that is not the way the process works.

I hope the majority in the House of Representatives is listening to this debate and listening to the American people and will act in the best interests of the American people and allow the process to move forward so we can keep government functioning.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

MR. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (MR. CARDIN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MR. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President we have come to the end of a long process that has had some signal moments to it. Clearly, one signal moment was a few days ago when the tea party activists came to the Capitol—came to this building—gathered outside, and were led by Republican House Members in chanting about the U.S. Government: “Shut it down! Shut it down! Shut it

down!” Shortly after that, there was a discussion between the Republican Speaker and the Members of the Republican caucus in which the Speaker indicated that they were to prepare for a government shutdown, and the response was a standing ovation, as reported by the Washington Post.

As the distinguished Senator from Maryland knows, we sit through our caucus meetings, and there has never been anything like an ovation on our side for the concept of a government shutdown. There is silence, maybe an occasional groan of disappointment, when we have heard about how the goal posts have been moved yet again to keep an agreement from being reached.

Recent polling shows there is a reason for this difference between the parties here, or the different attitudes and desires with respect to a government shutdown. Democratic voters prefer compromise to a shutdown by better than 3 to 1. By better than 3 to 1, Democratic voters would prefer us to work this out than to shut down the U.S. Government. On the other side, Republican voters actually favor shutting down the government. So it should come as no surprise that these public demonstrations demanding “shut it down” take place; that the Republican caucus on the House side gives standing ovations to the notion of shutting down the U.S. Government, and that we are now at the brink of a U.S. Government shutdown as a result.

There was a time when this appeared to be about the deficit. Clearly, we have had to make progress on the deficit, and we have made significant progress on the deficit, as was announced from last night's meeting between the Senate leaders, the President of the United States, and the House leaders that they had agreed on a \$78 billion number out of the \$100 billion number that had been the Republican goal. It is hard to say that we have not gone the extra mile when we are settling on a point of \$78 billion out of the \$100 billion that was requested.

As we have looked at the actual cuts that the other side has pushed for, there has appeared to be a pretty strong overlay between the cuts themselves and the political agenda of the other party. Things such as focusing 100 percent of their cost-cutting energy on only the spending side of the budget and only 12 percent of the pie. A slice of the pie that is only 12 percent was where they focused 100 percent of their attention. A tax on programs such as Head Start that help poor children get a head start in life and prove exceptional outcomes, to the point where the mayor of our capital city, Providence, RI, is a child who got his start in life in a Head Start Program. From there he went through the public school system and ended up at Harvard University. He became a lawyer, and he is now the mayor of Rhode Island's capital city. That is the kind of story that Head Start starts. Yet it was the focus of terrible cuts.

City Year and Teach For America—programs that take bright young Americans and put them into our schools to help younger kids learn to be better students and have more productive futures—catastrophic wipeout cuts were driven at those programs.

National Public Radio: Catastrophic wipeout cuts.

The Environmental Protection Agency was singled out for the worst treatment of all, reflecting the long relationship that has existed between the other party and corporate interests that do considerable damage to our air and water.

So if we look at what they are doing there, there were a number of people who became suspicious and concerned that the Republican cost-cutting agenda was a Trojan horse. We remember the Trojan horse. Troy was in its walls, the Greeks were outside. They couldn't get through the walls of Troy, so they built a horse. The Trojans thought it was a gift and they allowed it in, but the Trojan horse contained within it Greek soldiers who came out in the night and were able to open the gates and the attack came on Troy. That is the legend of the Trojan horse.

So there is a pretty good case I think some of us could make that a lot of what these cuts were was a Trojan horse to bring in, through the deficit-cutting agenda that we all agree on, a different ideological agenda that has long been associated with the Republican Party and that is not very popular. Indeed, at this stage, the tea party has less than one-third public support. So the notion of driving their agenda through isn't fair play. But if you know you are that unpopular, you want to attach yourself to something essential. You want to force your ideological agenda. I think that is where we are right now. It has been made clear by what has happened. Because once a number has been agreed to in a budget, clearly, the fight is no longer about the budget. A number has been agreed to: \$78 billion. Yet, the fight persists and the fight persists over women's health care.

I wish to share a few stories from Rhode Island, first about the title X family planning program, which is the target here. It was signed into law in 1970 by President Richard Milhous Nixon, a Republican. He said at the time that “no American woman should be denied access to family planning assistance because of her economic condition.” Representative George H.W. Bush strongly supported the enactment of the program.

Title X clinics provide reproductive health services to low-income women and young adults. It is an essential element in our American strategy to reduce unintended pregnancies. Notably, Federal law prohibits any title X funds under the Hyde amendment from being used for abortion services—none, zero, not permitted.

So the effort to zero out funding for title X is not about Federal funding

being used to support abortion services. It just isn't. Instead, it is about denying access to health care programs that serve over 5 million low-income individuals every year, and it is available to them because no one can be refused service based on the fact that they don't have the ability to pay.

We have a medical student who wrote in from Rhode Island who works at a community health center. He said he has been able to perform cervical cancer screenings and prescribe birth control for hundreds of women who would otherwise not have had access to these services, all thanks to title X. He described his patients: "Most of my patients worked hard at low-wage jobs that did not provide adequate health coverage." Indeed, they may not have provided any benefits at all. He concluded: "These women would not have been able to afford such vital health care without the support of Title X."

In Rhode Island, title X goes to 17 different community health centers and clinics, from the Northwest Community Health Center up in Pascoag, RI, to the Chaffee Health Center in Providence, to the Tri-Town Community Health Center in the Johnston area. It is across the State. One of those recipients is Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood would appear to be the real reason—although they take the whole program out, it is probably because Planned Parenthood is in it. They have overtargeted here.

The proposed budget would also prohibit Planned Parenthood from receiving any Federal funding. It is remarkable, because Planned Parenthood provides primary and preventive health care to 3 million Americans each year, and in rural or medically underserved areas, Planned Parenthood health care providers are often the only source of health care in the community. They are often the only source of health care for women in the community. Ninety percent of the care that is provided at Planned Parenthood health centers is primary and preventive health care: cancer screenings, Pap tests to identify women at risk of developing cervical cancer, mammograms to help detect breast cancer, routine gynecological exams and annual physicals, immunizations, and tests and treatments for STDs. They are cost effective and accessible.

Let me read some of the things that have come in from Rhode Island. Here is Rebecca from Cranston, RI, telling her story:

After I graduated college, I found myself without health insurance for the first time in my life. While uninsured and job hunting, I had no doctor or gynecologist, and I turned to Planned Parenthood for my basic health care needs.

This lasted for almost 4 years because I couldn't get a job with health insurance. If Planned Parenthood had not been there while I was getting on my feet, I would not have received cancer screening, breast exams, or have had a health care professional to answer my questions.

My mother had breast cancer twice and Planned Parenthood providers gave me peace

of mind. If the Federal funding is cut from Planned Parenthood, other young women will find themselves with nowhere to go and put off lifesaving tests. I plan on doing everything I can for this amazing, caring facility that stood by me when I needed them.

This is Nora who wrote to me from Warwick, RI:

Please do not let the loss of funding happen to Planned Parenthood. This health care agency has been a boon to myself and my two daughters for decades. If not for the availability of low-cost health care screenings through Planned Parenthood, we would not be able to afford regular checkups or things like cervical cancer and HPV because we cannot afford health insurance. Planned Parenthood provides us the opportunity to have these tests done at a price we can afford. I hope you will take my message to heart and vote to keep the funding in place for this wonderful organization.

Yes, Nora, I will take your message to heart.

Saren from Coventry, RI, wrote in to tell her story:

In 2004, I went to Planned Parenthood for a pap smear test. I didn't have a regular gynecologist or even a primary care doctor. Further testing revealed I had the beginnings of cervical cancer. I was stunned. Never in a million years did I ever expect to be told I had cancer, especially at the age of 24. The doctors at Planned Parenthood told me that the cancer was found early and formulated a course of action, but I was always worried that my chances of having children were low because of the surgery to remove the cancer.

Seven years later, I am happy to say I have not had an abnormal pap smear and I have two beautiful, healthy children. I can only wonder where I would be had I not gone to Planned Parenthood and had that pap smear. Those doctors saved my life and gave me the chance to become a mother.

It is getting rid of that, that is what is motivating our Republican colleagues to push this country into a government shutdown, and the price of that government shutdown is going to be high.

We are just in the beginning of our recovery. We are still deep in unemployment. In my State of Rhode Island, we are at 12 percent in the Providence metropolitan area, over 11 percent statewide. We are just beginning to recover. A government shutdown would cut off funding for Federal employees; it would stop their paychecks, it would shut down government projects as their funding ran out and they ground to a halt; it would shut down the private businesses, the corporations, the consultants who are working on government contracts as that funding ran out and their work ground to a halt; around the country, 800,000 people will be off the payroll.

That is not good for America. If we pass H.R. 1, the folks at Goldman Sachs—and we can say a lot of things about them, but I don't think anybody in this room will say they are not good with numbers about the economy—they have said it will drastically knock down our recovery 2 full percentage points out of the 3-percentage point growth we are predicting. That is about the same number of jobs. If we were to pass H.R. 1, our recovery is ba-

sically gone at that point. We will be back to where we started when President Obama took office and turned around the 700,000 job-a-month crash we were in—losing 700,000 jobs every month. So it will slowly go back in a painful way.

We don't want to knock that down with H.R. 1—the extreme House bill—and with a government shutdown that takes all that money out of the economy. Even more, we don't want to do it over a dispute that is now no longer about the budget, about the deficit, but only about trying to punish the program that allowed Saren from Coventry to discover her cervical cancer in time to be treated so she could survive that dangerous illness and have her dream of becoming a mother come true and have two beautiful children.

I urge us to get through this moment. I hope my colleagues will, frankly, declare victory, gloat a little, and say: We wanted \$100 billion and we got \$78 billion. We got way more than half-way.

But don't knock this country down, don't knock our government into a shutdown in order to score a political point about an organization that is so important to women's health care.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MANCHIN). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I have been carefully listening to the speeches of my colleagues, including the statements of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I feel compelled to come to the floor to speak about what I believe is a red herring and a political ploy.

This debate is not about women. As the mother of two children, one of them being my 6-year-old daughter, I believe it is unfair and inaccurate to say this is about women and their health.

Let's be clear on how we got to this point. Last year, even though they had majorities in both Houses, the Democrats failed to pass a budget for 2011 or even a single appropriations bill. Now the House has passed full funding for our military for the rest of this fiscal year and funding for the rest of our government for 1 week to allow us to resolve the remaining issues. That proposal does not even cut title X funding. Yet we have heard from speaker after speaker from the other side come to this floor and mischaracterize the potential shutdown of our government as being about women's health.

Let's talk about what we know to be true. We can end this potential government shutdown right now if the majority allows us to vote on the proposal that the House has already passed that

fully funds our military for the rest of this fiscal year and gives us a week to resolve the remaining issues and to resolve this once and for all. Then we can move on to the bigger issues we face in addressing the \$14 trillion debt that threatens our economic strength, threatens our national security, as our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has told us.

As a military spouse, I think we owe it to our men and women in uniform and their families who are right now making sacrifices for us overseas and around the world to immediately pass funding for our military for the remainder of this fiscal year, to pass the proposal the House has made. Our military deserves better than political ploys and red herrings.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, before I speak, is there a time limit in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Ten minutes.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak for 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, usually by this time on a Friday, or even a little earlier, I have had the pleasure of going back to Iowa on the weekend. I would much rather be doing that. Obviously, we have problems that have to be worked out, and there is reason for staying around this weekend, particularly for those of us who do not miss votes, and we do not want to miss a vote, hopefully, to keep government functioning.

There is one advantage of not being on an airplane going back to Iowa on a Friday when I do not have committee meetings and constituent meetings: I have been able to listen to a lot of the speeches today. We do not get that opportunity Monday through Thursday very often. It is quite a pleasure to be able to hear my colleagues speak, as they have on both sides of the aisle, so strongly about differently held views in this body about the budget issues and subsidiary issues that are being discussed at this time.

Listening to the debate, I have come to the conclusion that it was one big mistake that we did not get appropriations bills passed last year. I hope people on the other side of the aisle realize if those appropriations bills had been passed, we would not be here today worrying about shutting down government and reaching some gigantic compromise.

I suppose on the other side of the aisle there is a lot of ill feeling about

not taking advantage of the fact that last year there were 59 Democrats and only 41 Republicans in this body. The majority party could do just about anything it wanted to do. Of course, in the House of Representatives it was overwhelmingly controlled by the other political party, and that control particularly where appropriations bills pass.

Looking back now, I realize there was not any attempt to bring up any appropriations bills, which obviously is not a good way to run the government. I did listen to some excuses from the other side of the aisle when people were asked: How come no appropriations bills were passed? The answer from one Senator: We only had 59 votes, and Republicans would not let us bring it up.

Then I was in a quandary. There was not anything stopping the overwhelming majority of the Democratic Party in the other body from passing almost anything they wanted to because it is just a political fact of life, whether you have a Republican majority in the House of Representatives or a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives, as long as they stick together they can get anything done they want to get done. They can ignore the minority. They may not have been able to ignore the minority in the Senate, if 41 Republicans would stick together, but they hardly ever do. What a mistake it now must be for the Democratic Party not to have passed appropriations bills last year so we wouldn't be going through this. But it wasn't done.

I think, now, looking back, it was probably because they didn't want discussion of budget issues before the election. They didn't want the public being reminded about the \$1.5 trillion deficit. In other words, we borrow about 42 cents out of every \$1 we spend, and we take in about \$2.2 trillion and spend \$3.7 trillion. That is in the neighborhood of a \$1.5 trillion deficit. They probably didn't want that talked about. So come October 1, they passed a continuing resolution until December to get through the election, and then, when they got through the election, they would take care of it when we got back here.

But the elections are supposed to have consequences, and they do have consequences. If they do not have consequences, representative government and democracy doesn't mean much. So as the President himself said, he took a shellacking and they couldn't get it passed before Christmas. So the new people came in and took over—and it was the biggest turnover in Congress since 1938—and with a lot of new people there were a lot of new things to learn and it didn't get done by March 4. It was extended before Christmas until March 4, then 2 weeks, until March 18, and then 3 weeks, until this very day.

But what a mistake, with overwhelming majorities, this didn't get done in the usual time when we pass 12 appropriations bills to get things fund-

ed. It was very clear in the election that people wanted to stop this deficit spending, get the spending down, and get the size of government down. With the biggest turnover in Congress since 1938, they are going to expect some changes to be made, and that is what is going on right now with the level of expenditures.

We are led to believe by people on the other side that money is not the issue; that it is some social policy that is being debated and holding this up from happening. But I know this. The only possibility of not shutting down government, at least that is partly through the Congress, the Republicans are the only ones who have put forward legislation to reduce spending and to keep government open. It is kind of a commonsense approach that is used by the other body in sending us a bill that will fund Defense through the end of the year, and it will give more time for negotiation on the rest of the budget.

In funding Defense through the end of the year, we can't fight a war from week to week with how much money we have to spend. When we voted to put our men and women in danger in fighting this war on terror—with our men and women in danger, we should give them as much certainty as we can. Even now, with the possibility of not being paid—or the possibility their families are not going to get the support they are entitled to—it is just a terrible sin, when we have asked people to defend the country.

So that is the bill we ought to be taking up. But here we are, and there isn't any desire here to take it up, and the President says he is going to veto the bill. Why would the President be vetoing a bill that is going to give certainty to the military, the Defense Department, and what they can have to spend to do the job they are supposed to do, which is the No. 1 function of the Federal Government, our national security, and particularly for the families who are standing behind them?

So here we are trying to preempt, as far as domestic expenditures are concerned, the 22-percent increase that took place in 2009 and 2010. When we only have economic growth of 2½ to 3 percent, we can't be spending money at 22 percent increases, and that is on top of the \$814 billion stimulus bill that was passed that was supposed to keep unemployment under 8 percent—and which, obviously, hasn't kept unemployment under 8 percent. So preempt that and go back to the 2008 level of expenditures.

I never heard people complaining in 2008 that there wasn't enough money appropriated to perform the functions of government. It is very necessary that we do that. But we can't incorporate that 22 percent up here and build that into the base over a 10-year budget window. There are hundreds of billions of dollars in difference between the 2008 level of expenditures and the 2010 levels of expenditures, and that is what it is going to take. We have to be

looking ahead for the next 60 years, not just the next 6 months.

We need to take this gradual step toward the reduction of spending so government stops spending money it does not have. We have to start making decisions that are necessary about the future of our country. To a great extent, Washington is responsible for some of this. We have to reduce wasteful government spending. We have to tighten our belt in Washington, as families do at home. When you have dug yourself into a hole, the No. 1 rule is, stop digging. This bill, sent over from the House, will be the first step toward doing that. But for sure the public has a right to know the facts. They do not want us, with the facts they know, leaving our children in a bankrupt situation, which is what we will do if we don't immediately intervene and do something about it.

Also, this discussion about getting government spending down has something to do with simply creating an environment of certainty for our private sector. We have uncertainty in taxes, we have uncertainty in EPA regulations, and we have uncertainty from the standpoint of fiscal policy of the Federal Government—how much money are we going to continue to borrow and take away from the private sector. All these things lead to a reluctance of employers, large and small, in this country to hire people. So this debate is about creating jobs and putting in place a fiscal policy, along with a lot of other sensible policies.

But when we use the words “sensible policy”—people back home might not know this—we have to remember this city is an island surrounded by reality, and the only business in this town is government. People in government, including those of us who are elected, are in the wagon with somebody else pulling the wagon. So we have to go home to our districts and bring back some common sense. That common sense says government ought to live as families live—within their means.

Those are the President's words, not mine. When we put his budget out in early February, he said: Government has to live within its means. Then what sort of a budget does he put out? A 10-year budget window that increases the national debt from \$14 trillion to \$26 trillion.

I hope we get something agreed to tonight. I hope government does not shut down. It doesn't save money, like people think it should. It actually costs money, and it costs people the services they are entitled to. But if you don't remember anything else this Senator has said tonight, remember this: Elections have consequences, and there were great messages sent in this last election. The people expect us to let them know that we get it and that there aren't any excuses in the process.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the great State of Montana.

Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I rise in support of the Troop Pay Protection

Act. It is one of the bipartisan pieces of a very partisan puzzle, and it is common sense.

We owe it to our Nation's troops to avoid their suffering from the consequences if the House of Representatives shuts down this government. If we don't pass this measure, while we still have time, our troops will continue to serve us overseas—they will always be essential to the United States—but they won't get paid. That is unacceptable.

America's troops are America's heroes. They are serving us in difficult, dirty, dangerous conditions. They are away from their families, they are away from their homes and their communities, and they are risking their lives to answer the call of duty. Yet they still have the same financial responsibilities we all have here at home. They have mortgages to pay and car payments to make. They have families to take care of. We do our service men and women right by passing this bill.

The bill simply says: If there is a shutdown, don't make our troops pay the price for the failures of a few extremists in Washington, DC.

Make sure their paychecks come in on time. Delayed pay is the last thing the members of our military and their families should be burdened with.

I know there is talk that the House is trying to push through something similar, in an effort to cover some bases, but their plan isn't as straightforward as this bipartisan bill. Their plan to hold our troops harmless is part of a week-long spending measure loaded with a bunch of extreme provisions this country cannot afford. Because it is part of a temporary bill, if it is passed, we will be right back here making the same arguments next week.

I am always amazed at how dysfunctional this process can be. I have been reminded of that a lot this week. Here is an opportunity to throw some common sense back into the mix. I ask my colleagues to pass this measure and pass it now.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from the great State of Arkansas.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, one thing I would like to say is that I don't want a shutdown, and I don't like where we are tonight—the fact that we are here and our backs are against the wall on a shutdown. I think we, collectively, have done a great disservice to the American people. I think they deserve better than what they are getting right now from Congress.

I know the people I represent are hardworking. They are very sensible, kind of like the hard-working folks from the State of the Presiding Officer. But they are also very patriotic and they believe in this country. They believe in the values and the things that make this country great. They understand, the people of Arkansas, that right now we have 90,000 troops in Afghanistan and we have more than 45,000

in Iraq. They are there to serve this country and to serve the interests of this country.

I can take something local such as the Little Rock Air Force Base, and I can say we have more than 5,600 airmen and about 640 civilian employees who could be affected in one way or another by this shutdown. About 2,000 employees of the Arkansas National Guard will be affected. There are 956 guardsmen on Active Duty who would continue to work without pay; 233 Arkansas Army Reservists are deployed overseas, including 23 who are designated for Libya. The people in my State do not want to see the military affected in any way by the partisan gamesmanship that you see in Washington.

In fact, I would add a note to that. It is unconscionable that we should add stress to our military families right now, especially for those who are deployed. It is just unconscionable that we would do that under the circumstances we find ourselves in tonight.

Let me talk about two leaders who stepped up to try to solve this problem and tried to cut through all the mess that we see in Washington, tried to cut through the politics as usual. That would be Senator HUTCHISON from Texas and Senator CASEY from Pennsylvania. As my colleague from Montana said a moment ago, both of them worked in a very bipartisan way to craft legislation that would make sure, one way or the other, our troops get paid on time without any disruptions.

We have all heard the phrase “hard-earned pay.” How does it get any harder earned than by serving in combat for your country? Again, it is hard for me to understand how we are here talking about this tonight, that we have not already addressed it.

I hope whatever bill is offered is a bipartisan bill. I am not quite sure at the moment who is going to be the lead sponsor. As I said, I looked at the legislation offered by the two Senators I mentioned before. In the Senate things can change for various reasons, but however it comes down I hope we will not only consider but that we will pass legislation that will protect our Active-Duty men and women and our Reserve Component and the Coast Guard. We cannot forget the Coast Guard. A lot of times they are an afterthought, but certainly they do great things and they serve our country just like everybody else and they deserve to be included in this.

Also, we need to give the Secretary of Defense the discretion so he can run his department in a way that will not weaken us. He needs that discretion, whatever that may mean. Again, we may have some differences on the details. One Senator may think one thing and another think another, but on the bottom line we need to give him

enough discretion to make sure nothing in that shutdown ends up weakening our ability to perform the missions we need performed or puts our troops in any additional danger.

In conclusion, let me offer an observation. In the last few weeks, on more occasions than I can count, I have witnessed Senators and Congressmen, even those in the blogosphere—the commentators, the talking heads, the so-called experts—doing exactly what, in my view, is wrong with Washington; that is, they are playing the blame game. They are holding a press conference and pointing fingers at everybody but themselves. It is going on all over the place. I am not singling out one person or one party, but we have seen that way too much. The truth is, the folks it is hurting are the American people.

Our democracy is designed in such a way and has a track record where we all know it will work, and it will work great, and it will get the job done. We represent people and we can get in here and debate hard and fight hard and have our differences, but at the end of the process we have votes, we make decisions, and then we move on.

Right now, for whatever reason, this is a problem in both Chambers. It is not just in the Senate. Not just one party is at fault. But for whatever reason we are seeing a breakdown in the system. That is not good for the country. Tonight we are talking about our troops, and certainly it is not good for them.

I could easily spend the next 10 minutes at my desk blaming the Republicans for where we are tonight. I know they have said we had not passed anything. That is not true. We passed extensions six times to keep the government running. But I don't want to get into all that because I could spend 10 minutes talking about how awful and terrible the Republicans are, and then I could turn right back around and spend the next 10 minutes talking about how terrible the Democrats are.

If we would be honest with the American people, both are to blame. I cannot stand here in good conscience and blame just one person or one party. The fault lies with all of us.

Right now, because of the partisan bickering, because of the breakdown, we are using our military as a pawn in this budget fight. That is something we should never do. We are not helping anyone. This is not good government. We are not doing our citizens and our people any favors by doing this.

I hope tonight, before we go out of here, we would pass something—again, whatever bill it is. I am not hung up on who has to be the lead sponsor or what the number of that bill has to be. I hope we will pass something that will make sure our troops get paid on time and that takes care of our Active Duty, the Reserve and the Coast Guard, and it also gives the Secretary of Defense enough discretion to run his department as it needs to be run. Under the

circumstances, I think that is not even close to too much to ask. I think that is perfectly within the bounds of reason. I hope and pray tonight before we leave we could all agree to do that.

By the way, if we did put that on the Senate floor and didn't load it up with lots of agenda items, if we put that on the Senate floor in a clean fashion, I think it would sail out of here probably unanimously. I cannot speak for the House, but my guess is we would see the same result down there.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PRYOR. My understanding is we have other Senators who may be on the way to speak, so I ask unanimous consent the period for morning business, for debate only, be extended until 9 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the majority leader to be recognized at 9 p.m.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, while we are awaiting other Senators, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, throughout this day a lot of our constituents back home have been watching the debate. I wonder maybe if they are a little frustrated. I talked earlier this morning about throwing rotten apples at each other. There has been a lot of that today. I am not going to do that tonight. I suggested this morning one of the things we could do while we are waiting to see whether an agreement can be reached to fund the government over this fiscal year is to try to shed some light on the process which undoubtedly is a bit confusing to people: What exactly is it that we are arguing about, how did we get here, and what do we have in the future.

We talked a little bit this morning, and what we are talking about today, and what we are hoping to achieve tonight, is an agreement that would determine how much we will spend to fund the Federal Government for the next approximately 6 months through the end of September, which is the end of the fiscal year that begins each October 1.

That is an important proposition. It is important enough that there has been a lot of very difficult debate about that, as people have seen over the last several days, and certainly today. It appears there is still a bit of a deadlock over exactly how much money should be saved in the last 6 months of this fiscal year.

But when we have concluded this particular debate and determined how

much we are going to spend to fund the government through the end of September, we are going to turn to some even more important issues, and they are going to require our concentration, our reaching across the aisle to talk to each other, to the other body, and both bodies of the Congress to speak to the President. We are going to have to listen to the American people and try to reach important understandings because then we are talking about funding the government for the entire fiscal year for 2012 and also trying to figure out what to do with the President's request to extend the debt ceiling.

As I mentioned this morning briefly, extending the debt ceiling is a little bit like going to your credit card company and saying: All right, I have used up all of my available credit, but I want to buy something else. Will you let me spend a little more on the credit card? That is what the President has asked Congress to do, to extend the debt ceiling. We will have a robust debate about that.

Let me see if I can put what we are doing here in this context. At least for the year 2011, which we are halfway through, we will have reduced spending by a pretty dramatic amount, somewhere in the neighborhood of \$40 and \$50 billion. I don't know exactly how much until we are done, but when we add that to what we call around here the baseline, and multiply it by 10 years, we get substantial savings. Just on the \$10 billion we saved earlier this morning, over 10 years that \$10 billion equates to \$140 billion saved over the 10-year period. So we are talking about substantial money.

But that probably pales in comparison to what we are going to need to save in the entire budget for the fiscal year 2012. There is no shortage of problems that have attracted our attention—for example, the trillions of dollars in unfunded liabilities coming from the mandatory spending side of our ledger, in addition to the way that we are trying to save money just to keep the government running. By mandatory we mean the programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, some veterans spending, and so on.

I talked about the estimate of hitting our debt limit. The Treasury Secretary estimates we will hit that debt limit—in other words, the amount we borrowed on our credit card and cannot exceed; that is the total amount of the U.S. legal debt—no later than May 16 of this year. So May 16, the President says we need to address the debt ceiling. If you are not keeping track, the current debt limit is about \$14.3 trillion. So we are going to be pressing up against \$14.3, in other words, and we are going to have to borrow more money if we are going to spend more in the next year.

Republicans have offered a variety of ideas. I want to alert my colleagues to what some of these ideas are so we can begin thinking about them and hopefully acting on them in the runup to